



March 24, 2004

DMVS MAILS LAPSE AND PENDING SUSPENSION NOTICES THIS WEEK

The Department of Motor Vehicle Safety (DMVS) begins Friday contacting by mail over two hundred thousand Georgia vehicle owners throughout the State who have either failed to maintain mandatory liability insurance coverage since January 1, 2004 or have no current proof of insurance in the Georgia Electronic Insurance Compliance System (GEICS).

Approximately 63,000 lapse notices will be sent to the owners of any vehicle that experienced one calendar day without the mandatory liability insurance coverage since the first of the year. The letter will inform the owner that they have 30 days from the date of the letter in which to pay a lapse fee of \$25.00 to their County Tax Commissioner, or the vehicle's registration will be suspended. Failure to pay the lapse fee will result in the suspension and/or revocation of the registration of the vehicle plus costly restoration fees in addition to the lapse fee.

From this point forward, the DMVS will begin weekly mailings of this notice. Insurance companies are legally required to electronically transmit the policy termination dates and notification of new effective dates for all registered vehicles. Based upon these dates, the DMVS can determine which vehicles are not maintaining the mandatory coverage.

Letter recipients with questions or concerns need to contact their insurance company and their County Tax Commissioner's office for assistance.

A "Notice of Pending Registration Suspension Or Revocation" will be sent to the owner of any vehicle who currently has not yet been added to the auto insurance database, after they have registered their vehicle with a binder or declaration page from their current insurance company and has a "no valid insurance" status on the database. This letter will inform the owner that they have 30 days in which to rectify the issue or their vehicle registration will be suspended. Approximately 215,000 vehicle owners will receive this notice.

The recipient's insurance company has 30 days to submit proof of insurance electronically unless the vehicle's insurance can be proven with a fleet card or self-insurance card and certificate which must be presented in person at the county tag office. If the vehicle's registration is suspended or revoked, it may result in a period of time up to six months during which the vehicle's registration cannot be reinstated and fees up to \$185.00. The DMVS will also begin weekly mailings of this notice.

It is unlawful to operate a vehicle without Georgia liability insurance coverage. The operation of any vehicle while the registration is suspended, revoked or cancelled is a misdemeanor. The vehicle may also be subject to impoundment until these issues are resolved.